

THEATRE PROGRAMME, SCHOOL OF ENGLISH, FILM, THEATRE & MEDIA STUDIES
2008 COURSE INFORMATION SHEET

THEA 401/501, ENGL 451

DRAMA AND THEORY

CRN 9016 (THEA 401)/CRN 9025 (THEA 501)/CRN 9192 (ENGL451)

[There is an] art to translating into the language of knowledge the forward thrusts of creation.

-Etienne Gilson

Teaching staff

Course co-ordinators: First trimester: David O'Donnell (Room 303, 77 Fairlie Tce; tel. 4636828. Email david.odonnell@vuw.ac.nz. Second trimester: Matt Wagner (Room 310, 77 Fairlie Terrace; Tel: 463 6712. email: Matt.Wagner@vuw.ac.nz). Office hours will be posted on the co-ordinators' office doors.

Class times and venue

Full year, alternate weeks (weeks 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 of each trimester). The seminar is Wednesdays from 3.10 – 6.00pm, in Room 305, 77FT.

Please note that any additional information or changes will be sent by email in the first instance, so it is **essential** that students get an email address and check it regularly. Information may be announced in class, posted on the course notice board at 77FT level 3, or sent by email.

Please note that cell phones are to be turned off during classes.

Course aims

The course will bring a selection of historical and contemporary critical and theoretical perspectives to bear on a representative range of classical and contemporary dramatic texts. Topics covered will include pre-20th century dramatic theory (with focus on Classical dramaturgy and Elizabethan dramaturgy), and an in-depth examination of more recent theoretical approaches, including phenomenological, psychoanalytical, feminist, postcolonial, and contemporary performance theories.

Course objectives

1. To develop an appreciation of various critical approaches to the art, experience, and social place of drama and theatre.
2. To be able to analyse live performance and dramatic text from a variety of critical approaches.
3. To develop an awareness of the implications of these critical approaches to contemporary theatre practice.
4. To develop skills in close reading of plays in a critical context.
5. To develop research skills and clear critical writing about theoretical and dramaturgical issues of drama and theatre.

Set Texts

THEA 401/501 reader Available at Student Notes
W.B. Worthen, ed. *The Wadsworth Anthology of Drama*, 4th ed. (Thomson Wadsworth, 2004)
[Note: 3rd ed., entitled *The Harcourt Brace Anthology of Drama* is permissible]
Mark Fortier. *Theory/Theatre: An Introduction*. 2nd edition. (London: Routledge, 2002)
Bernier, Eric et.al. *Seven Streams of the River Ota* (London: Methuen, 1996)
Shakespeare *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (any good edition)
Stoppard, Tom *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (any good edition)

Recommended text

Oscar J. Brockett *History of the Theatre*, 9th ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2002)

Assessment

All assessment is internal.

Project 1	seminar presentation (30 mins) and handout (max. 2 sides of A4)	25%
Essay 1	2,500 words (due Wed 4 June, 5pm)	35%
Essay 2	3,000 words (due Wed 15 October, 5pm)	40%

Further details will be given out in class

Relationship Between Assessment and Objectives

All assessment has the twofold objective of assessing students' progress in the course and of providing feedback to assist students to achieve the course objectives.

Note: For THEA 401, 'grades gained in individual papers are always subordinate to the overall assessment made by the full group of examiners for the Honours programme as a whole' (*Graduate Programme in English, Film and Theatre 2001*). For THEA 501, grades are final.

THEATRE PROGRAMME Extensions Policy

If you wish to ask for an extension (e.g., because of pressure of work) please do so well before the due date. Extension requests on the day the assignment is due will not normally be accepted.

Requests for extensions must be made in writing, by filling out the extension form [available on your course Blackboard site] and getting your Course Co-ordinator to sign it. Only Course Co-ordinators may grant extension, not tutors. The signed Extension form must be attached to the assignment when it is submitted, plus any relevant documentation. If circumstances prevent you from accessing the extension form, you must attach an email from the Course Co-ordinator, which confirms that an extension has been granted, to your assignment. In real emergencies we can of course be flexible, but the most important thing is for you to somehow let us know as soon as possible.

Extensions will not be granted beyond 24 October, except under exceptional circumstances. The University does not permit the School to accept work after the last day of the examination period.

Work submitted late without an extension will be considered, as long as it is received within two weeks of the due date. Unless there are exceptional circumstances (e.g., medical reasons with certificate) work handed in late will normally lose a grade (i.e. drop from B+ to B, etc) for each day or part day late, starting from the hour the work is due. Comments on late work will be minimal. Note: if you fail to hand in work before this two week deadline, you may be considered as having failed to meet a mandatory requirement and therefore fail the course.

Aegrotat provisions may apply if you are unable to submit your final project for unavoidable reasons. The Aegrotat procedures are listed in *Victoria University Calendar* available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the Victoria homepage at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html

In such a case you should also contact the course co-ordinator. There is a university policy on reasonable accommodation with respect to assessment procedures for students with disabilities (see *Calendar* as above).

Class preparation and presentations

All students should prepare for each class by reading the relevant play and critical readings set for that session. Note any problems in understanding either the dramaturgy of the play or the theoretical argument and consider the significance of associated reading. **Every student should bring at least one pertinent question and reasoned opinion to contribute to each of these discussions.**

Contribution to discussions will not be formally assessed, but may be taken into account when the final grade is being considered. In addition, each student will be asked to give a short seminar presentation for assessment on a selected topic. The presentations will be expected to raise key issues for class discussion, and presenters should be prepared to take a lead role in facilitating that discussion.

Workload

The university usually anticipates that you should be able to devote at least 24 hours per week to a half-year paper in a 4-paper graduate programme. Therefore you should probably expect to spend, on average, about 18 hours per week (apart from class time and screenings) in reading, preparation, thinking and essay writing. At Honours and Masters level it is expected that students will attend every seminar; if you are going to miss a seminar through ill health or whatever, please contact the course co-ordinator in advance if possible.

Mandatory course requirements

In order to pass the course, completion and submission of all assignments is required, as well as an overall passing grade.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the Victoria homepage at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html <
http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html>

Information on the following topics is available electronically under "Course Outline General Information" at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>
<<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>>

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support
- Plagiarism

This information can also be found on the course Blackboard site under the Course Resources tab.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means **no cheating**. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times. Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. Plagiarism is **prohibited** at Victoria.

The University defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not.

'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea, even if it is presented in your own style. It includes material from books, journals or any other printed source, the work of other students or staff, information from the Internet, software programmes and other electronic material, designs and ideas. It also includes the organization or structuring of any such material.

Plagiarism is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct (www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct) and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- suspension from class or university
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course.

Find out more about plagiarism and how to avoid it, on the University's website at: www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html.

THEATRE PROGRAMME FACILITIES

There are standard requirements regarding conduct within 77 FT, 93 KP and 225 Aro St:

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted. **Please smoke outside and dispose cigarette ends in the ashtray provided outside the main door at 77 FT.**

Food

Food may only be consumed in the 77FT Green Room, 85FT, 93KP and Aro St kitchen areas.

No beverages (with the exception of bottled water) are allowed in the studio theatre, dressing room, film room, library, foyer area, and 93 KP or 225 Aro St and 85FT(except kitchen areas listed above).

Student and staff using kitchen areas are strongly expected to clean up after themselves **Strictly no food or drink in the 85FT Digital Edit Suites.**

Alcoholic drinks are not to be brought onto the premises unless authorised by Programme Director Film or Programme Director Theatre

Green Room

The Green Room is available to students working in the Film and Theatre Programmes. **You are expected to clean up after yourselves** (this includes returning any mugs removed from the Green Room and operating the dishwasher).

Library

Students are encouraged to make full use of the Robert Lord Library at 77 Fairlie Terrace; however, please note that **books and department materials do not leave the building.** Please return books to shelves before you leave the library.

End of Class

Rooms 306 (lecture theatre), 305, 205 (film room), 209 (seminar room), studios, studio foyer, 93 KP and 225 Aro St **must have the desks and chairs returned to order for any following classes or rehearsals.**

Lockers

Lockers are available to majoring drama students on Level 0 77FT. There are only 52 so once they run out those with double lockers will have to consider sharing. Students provide their own lock and key. See Administrator in room 307. Access your lockers via back stairs through Green Room. Please make sure the door to the main stairwell remains shut Access will not be available during the trimester break so please take everything with you at the end of this trimester and inform the Administrator if you are not taking a drama subject next trimester.

Theatre Rules

There are more specific rules regarding safety and security within the premises occupied by Film and Theatre. These are unlikely to be relevant to this course as they are largely to do with practical work and use of the theatre, but please note them as posted up around the building and as listed in the FAT Book. They are also available electronically on Blackboard.

Outline timetable

A detailed reading guide for each class is contained in the Course reader, available from Student Notes

THEA 401/501 CLASS TIMETABLE

<i>CLASS WED 3 – 6pm</i>	<i>TOPIC</i>	<i>ASSESSMENT</i>
1.	27 February	Intro/Classical Dramaturgy
2.	12 March	Theory-Philosophy-Theatre
3.	26 March	Semiotics and structuralism
4.	9 April	Psychoanalytic theory
<i>Mid-term break</i>		
5.	7 May	Marxist criticism and cultural materialism
6.	21 May	Theories of Actor Training
		<i>Essay 1 due Wed 4 June, 5pm</i>
 <u><i>MID YEAR BREAK</i></u>		
7.	9 July	Phenomenology
8.	23 July	Deconstruction
9.	6 August	Feminisms and Gender Theory
<i>Mid-term break</i>		
10.	3 September	Postcolonial theory
11.	17 September	Postmodernism
12.	1 October	Performance Theory
		<i>Essay 2 due Wed 15 October, 5pm</i>